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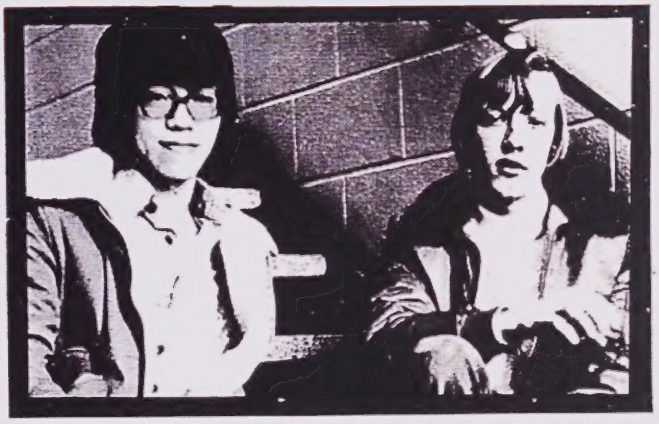

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VOL. 6 NO. 4 JULY/SUMMER 1985

CONTENTS

FEATURES

3 **Asian Youth Realities II**
Cultural Differences, School, Dating
by Jack Seto and Christine Pinto

11 **Youth Adaptation, Parental Alienation**
The Conflict Over Heritage
by Nancy Chan

17 **A Hard Life but Rewarding**
Visa Students in Canada
by Alfred Lam

21 **1977 is Coming**
Hong Kong's Year of Destiny
by Dora Nipp

23 **Death in An Evacuation Camp of One Who Never Saw Japan**
A Short Story
by Kerri Sakamoto

25 **Rules of Survival**
A Documentary Drama
by Daisy Lee

27 **Being the Intellectual Forefront**
Chinese Students Movements in N. America 1880-1984
by Jim Wong-Chu

DEPARTMENTS

2 **Editorial**

31 **Contributors**

Editor for this issue: Jack Seto
Editorial/Production Coordinator: Satish Dhar
Editorial Assistance: Christine Pinto, Teri Chan, Dora Nipp
Art Direction: Andy Tong, Peter Foto
Cover: Andy Tong

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EDITORIAL

Being an Asian Canadian youth isn't easy these days. But whoever said it was easy anyway. Not only do you experience the usual dilemmas of growing up, but also the realization of being different. Our colour, culture and beliefs don't quite fit into what is supposed to be the mainstream North American lifestyle.

High school was an important factor in our development during the adolescence years. At that time I noticed within the classrooms and cafeterias how each ethnic group was seated together. Bruce Lee was our preferred subject, not art history.

I associated myself with two distinct group of friends. The first group was the Hong Kong born kids: nicknamed "F.O.B.'s" or translated, "Fresh Off the Boat." I was the only *"juk sing"* or "C.B.C." That is a "Canadian Born Chinese". I'm still not quite sure whether I was an integral part of the group or just a novelty. Take for instance walking together along the sidewalk. I was the one usually walking behind them constantly interjecting a few words now and then like an eager dog begging for attention. However, there were good times as well. There was a sense of comradship and an air of pride of our common bond of being Chinese Canadians. We would run to the nearest movie theatre showing the latest Kung Fu flick or to a dance party hoping this is the night.

On the other hand with my "C.B.C." friends, most of them like myself were going through an identity crisis. We weren't totally accepted by our Caucasian peers because we looked different. With the Hong Kong born youths we're not totally accepted because we're white inside. It was like banging our heads against a wall. What frustration! One time, one of my "C.B.C" classmate even came to the point of trying to beat us up if we clung on to our white friends.

My mother came up with her own facts by saying with a stern look on her face, "If you date and marry a white girl, you'll be disowned. You will regret it in the future." I bet every Chinese or Asian guy got the same lecture about those loose white women and how high the divorce rates among them. What fallacies!

In post secondary school I joined the Chinese Students Association. It was at its turning point. Usually CSA's meetings were very formal and an exclusive bastion of Hong Kong born students.

The so called *"juk sings"* joined the association in large numbers. Large enough to put them in Key administrative posts. The meetings were casual and friendly. Slowly the Hong Kong students joined in the fun.

Jack Seto

Asian Youth Realities II

Cultural Differences, School, Dating

by Jack Seto and Christine Pinto

This is the second half of a set of interviews with Asian youth. As stressed in the previous issue, this is not a scientific survey of Asian youth attitudes and perceptions. It's rather a glimpse at how Asian youth reflect upon their own experiences. Some of us can relate to these reflections. For others, these reflections provide a view of unfamiliar territory.

In this segment we focus on Asian youths' views on their friends, their school life; their views on the cultural gap between Canadian born and overseas born; and of course, last but not least, dating.

What kind of friends did you have? Were they Canadian born Asians, overseas born Asians or other ethnic groups?

Jeff: I moved to a suburbia-type area where the dominant ethnic groups are Polish and Ukrainians. I was the token Chinese in that neighbourhood. I found it difficult to identify with them. It was hard getting into their social groups. They had their own languages. I had to find ways of getting around that. When I got into university things changed. There's a wider cross section of people on campus.

The way to interact with Polish and Ukrainians when I was 15 was sports. If you were very good in sports, they accepted you.

Rosalia: I haven't yet met a Canadian born Filipino of my age. Most of them who are of my age group came here when they were young. I guess they're Canadian to me.

I get along with the other ethnic groups, like the Chinese. There was one white Canadian girl from outside Toronto. She moved here and got a job at Princess Margaret Hospital. She and I used to hang out a lot together. She was kind of different from what I'm used to. Her ideas of fun are different. They are a little wild for me, like going to bars, going away and trying to meet guys.

Mayur: I generally prefer friends of my own colour and background. That way if I do meet a girl who is special, there won't be any cultural gap coming between us in our marriage. At school, I had all types of friends like Canadians, Blacks and Chinese when I was 15. After school, I stuck to my own group of Indians. It felt good getting into our culture. One time I even took my Chinese friends to an Indian movie.

Mike: My best friend was Asian. He came from Korea. He lived across the street from me. He was 8 when he came to Toronto. He didn't have any accent.

Tom: I guess I feel more comfortable with Canadian born Chinese. As far as overseas born Chinese are concerned, I feel they are culturally different from me. Language is part of the problem. It's difficult to communicate with them. With the other ethnic groups, I really don't have that many problems. I work basically with ethnics. I enjoy different types of people.

Lisa: I like to get to know different cultures. I can mingle with both Chinese Canadians and white Canadians because they think more like we do. The white Canadians put you on a pedestal as they are mesmerized by your culture and what you are. They don't think you are like them. They treat you differently.

Elaine: I grew up in Hamilton in a white neighbourhood. There was one Chinese family and one Japanese. We were the Chinese one. I never had any problems, pre-

Aruna: The blacks stayed together, the Italians studied and then there were the stoners. The stoners were mostly white.

judice wise, growing up. But my brothers did. I guess I just blended in more. I'd always had white friends. My friends never thought of me as anything else but myself. And I never thought of myself as a minority in the group.

Mary: It's only recently that I started hanging around with Canadian born Chinese. That's because I moved to downtown Toronto. When I was about 17, there was a rude awakening. I found out there were a lot of people like myself. I don't get along personally with "F.O.B.'s" (Fresh Off the Boat). There is a cultural difference since I was born here and they weren't. I don't speak the language and that doesn't help either.

With other groups, I had some friends who are Filipinos that were born in the Philippines. They're fine. Blacks too. But I mostly get along with Canadian born Chinese.

During your high school and university years what kinds of friends did you have?

Charles: My first year at university was in Windsor. I had many Canadian born Chinese friends there. Usually I stayed home. I didn't go out with many of my "C.B.C." (Canadian Born Chinese) friends. But after a certain period of time, I started to communicate with them. I went out to restaurants with some C.B.C.'s after a year. We get along well.

Mike: Most of them were Chinese Hong Kong visa students. I found there was a lot of prejudice towards blacks and less towards Asians. In our class, there was one black. I noticed that the visa students were more reserved and diligent than the others. They had their feet in both worlds. I must say it was hard for them.

There were no Asians at our graduation formal. I guess it was because there were no females. The Hong Kong visa students are here for an education and not for sports or any extra-curricular activities. However, there were a few of them in the band.

The teachers left visa students alone. In class they never put up their hands to answer questions. Not only that, they sat in clusters. Visa students were very career-oriented. They were less concerned about overall peer pressure, although there was competition for high marks. In their peer group there wasn't any Caucasians. Sometimes there was a landed immigrant though. Most of them weren't into following the latest fashions. It must be because of their living standards and their family footing the bill for everything. Overall, it was hard on them.

I had my first exposure to an Asian teacher at school. Was he ever a disciplinarian! He would leave the Asians alone though. I guess because they were respectful and knew the work.

Mohammed: I picked up smoking because of my peers in high school. You know it's ironic. I thought because of the restrictions at my

Name	Birthplace	Ethnicity	Sex	Age
Lisa	Canada	Chinese	Female	26
Jeff	Canada	Chinese	Male	29
Rosalie	Philippines	Filipino	Female	28
Tom	China	Chinese	Male	33
Elaine	Canada	Chinese	Female	23
Alex	Philippines	Filipino	Male	21
Mary	Canada	Chinese	Female	19
Charles	Hong Kong	Chinese	Male	24
Mayur	India	Indian	Male	19
Mike	Canada	English	Male	22
Nadia	Uganda	Indian	Female	26
Jim	United Kingdom	Scottish	Male	22
Jane	Canada	English	Female	27
Mohammed	Pakistan	Indian	Male	23
Nguyen	Vietnam	Chinese	Male	21
Ming	Malaysia	Chinese	Male	24
Aruna	India	Indian	Female	19

Mary: I hate to admit it but I'm prejudiced against F.O.B.'s (Fresh Off the Boat). At the same time I feel bad because I'm Chinese myself.

boarding school in Pakistan I was caged. I thought after graduating from school I would be liberated. I would go abroad and expect new things. Now, looking back, my best years were in high school. It's because I had so many friends. Now after school, it's been abysmal. High school was the high point of my social existence.

Lisa: At university I started to notice all the different minorities in one place. It was strange to see all the Chinese, Greeks, Blacks, etc., sitting in their own sections or groups. Our group, however, was mixed. It had its differences and by itself was a distinct group.

Rosalia: When I was in high school I associated more with the Chinese because there were hardly any Filipinos.

Jeff: I went to one high school from grade 9 to 12 and it was dominated by the Polish and Ukrainians. I mostly felt like an outsider who's trying to get in and be accepted. I decided one year that I would go to a downtown high school (Harbord C.I.) and see how it is from that point of view. It was quite an experience. I never had the chance to be in a situation where all the ethnic groups, including my own, interacted together. I was glad. I fitted in so well. It was refreshing. Before I was always looking in, but in Harbord I'm now looking out. It has opened a lot of avenues and experiences for me. At university, it seems that your ethnicityy has no bearing on how you get along. It is based on what you study and how you come across as a person. That's more important.

Ming: When I was in Singapore, I was quite smart, but here, I'm even smarter than the other students. The school in Singapore that I attended was like a private school for smart children and you were admitted by your I.Q. level. In Toronto, kids are admitted by neighbourhood. So I was better than average. My best subjects were sciences. I got A's in all subjects and a B plus in English.

I was younger than the average age by 2 years, and was surprised by the physically bigger girls. Everything was larger in Canada – the girls, the cars. I wasn't interested in girls in Singapore. I have become more interested in them here.

Mike: I find university surprising.

Mohammed: I like Pakistani girls more than Canadians. They have more warmth and sensitivity.

People do not interact. There are cliques. I assumed that people at university would have a broader outlook. This hasn't been the case. The Asians are overlooked. They are still in a cultural bind.

Mohammed: I went to a Vancouver community college and was surprised at the level of anonymity we felt there. I came from an almost "incestuous" system where everyone knew each other. Here, it's isolated and I felt alienated with very little social contact.

Tom: At university, I joined the Chinese student association. But again there was still a problem. It's because most of the members of the group were overseas Chinese. In fact, I was the only Chinese Canadian in our association.

Aruna: I hung around in an Indian group in high school. All Italians and Chinese hung around in their own groups. So the Indians did the same. We were so young then. We chased guys. I chased any Indian guy. But my best friend was a Canadian.

The teachers were okay. We got special attention because some of our teachers were Indian too. We got away with a lot of stuff. I changed drastically in high school. I looked 19 then but now I look 18. I spent so much on clothes. It's a phase you go through. The Italian girls were too much into looking good. All I remember wanting to do was to look good too.

I went out with an Indian guy. He was funky. He could pass for 19 and we even went to clubs. He smoked pot but I didn't. I stayed clean. He would do crazy things, throw raw eggs at buildings, get into trouble with the cops. That's how he used to get his thrills.

Some other groups would party all night. That's what they told us. The blacks stayed together, the Italians studied, and then there were the stoners. The stoners were mostly whites. There was only one black and one Indian among them.

I couldn't keep up with my boyfriend in grade 12. I didn't like what he did. I had also joined a group which was a group of the smartest kids. I never made the honour rolls, except maybe once or twice, but they wanted me around.

I changed when I met my boyfriend X. He was a real browner, so I pushed myself too. He was the one who told me to stick with engineering and I haven't regretted it.

I like university. Here you are all on your own. It's what you make of yourself.

Is there a gap between the Cana-

Jeff: My parents warned me: "If you go out with a white girl, you'll be disowned."

dian born and overseas born Asians?

Alex: There's a big difference. I don't know if it's a trend or what, but Filipinos tend to stick with each other. You can always spot them in groups. It can be bad.

With Canadians, it's always a new thing. You don't go to the same bar or dance place all the time. However with Filipinos, they go to the same place every week. With Canadians, everything is done at the spur of the moment.

Charles: Yes, but let's add one more group. The immigrant who came at an early age. They adopted the Canadian way of life and still retained the Chinese culture.

At the U. of T., there is always a gap. It also affects the visa students here too. The overseas born stick around with their own group. I guess it's due to the language problem.

Mary: I get along better with C.B.C.'s and other ethnic groups. We see things in the same way. I hate to admit it, but I'm prejudiced against F.O.B.'s. They irritate me. At the same time I feel bad, because I'm Chinese myself. I'm terribly rude to them. It's okay if they come up and talk to me, however, I probably wouldn't make the first move.

Lisa: (Referring to a friend's wedding banquet held recently) There were six Chinese people from Hong Kong sitting across from us. One of them opened his mouth the most. He was the one who annoyed me the most. We were sitting there minding our own business. We didn't know them and they didn't know us. It still upsets me when I think about it. This man was putting Chinese Canadians down by saying that we were slow in doing things and that we had to be pushed. Like we had no drive. In Hong Kong society is different. Canada is a very conservative country. Life in Hong Kong is very competitive. He was saying that Chinese Canadians are lazy and that we don't know what's good for us. Maybe he had a bad experience with some Chinese Canadians. I'm not saying we're all smart but we're not all stupid either.

This man's little daughter was there too. I think she's about three. He said, "Once my daughter is five, I'm going to send her back to Hong Kong for my mother to raise until she's sixteen. Then she will come back to Toronto." He didn't let his daughter play with little Chinese Canadian girls because he found that we are loud and rowdy like boys. Plus he finds that we are too rough. He's going to have some sissy daughter. Actually she's going to be a typical Hong Kong

Elaine: I'm attracted to white guys. I have never been attracted to guys of my race.

broad.

What is a typical Hong Kong broad?

Lisa: They're very fashion conscious. I find they're sneaky. They use their boyfriends and also us. We are more honest and they're phony. It's like they're afraid to reveal their true selves to you. I find that they're so helpless that they can't take the garbage out. They're so sucky. They come across as women libbers, meanwhile they're so bloody fussy and nitpicky. They might as well go back to the old country where they belong. You are here to survive. They think that the biggest thrill is to see movies, play Mah Jong and go shopping.

How about the guys? Do they fare much better?

Lisa: Some do. I think a lot of them want to be accepted like "George." This guy "George" wants so badly to be accepted as a Canadian. But he has a language problem. He doesn't trust the people from Hong Kong because of a lot of bad experiences. You know, they used him. And I think that is really sad. I find a lot of the guys are spoiled. Mind you, some of the daughters are too. But I find that the guys have an air about them. Like the guy in the banquet I was talking about earlier.

Mohammed: As far as the Asian F.O.B.'s are concerned, there are the Urdu medium types. There's no discrimination between them and the English speaking types. In Canada, I rather speak to them in English and if I'm in Pakistan, I speak to them in Urdu.

Ming: Singaporeans are more disciplined. It's more of a feeling than what you can pinpoint. The more I think about it, the less sense it makes. Singaporeans off the boat? I wouldn't be embarassed by that. Singaporeans dress better than the people over here.

Life is more competitive in Singapore, life is easy here. We are less ambitious and more sloppy, like Americans. Here we have more of a sense of community. We have as much a sense of identity as other ethnic people. People in Singapore don't need a sense of community, money gives them a sense of community.

What do you feel about dating?

Nadia: Boys never asked me out at school. They asked me questions about homework. But when I moved to Toronto where our community is much larger, the boys asked me out. I wasn't their pal anymore but a possible date.

Jeff: Going back to primary school, I had a brief exposure to Chinese girls. At the time all girls were a mystery. Then my parents warned me by saying, "If you go out with a white girl, you'll be disowned." Naturally because of the fear of death, I said I liked Chinese girls. Then I got displaced and moved to another neighbourhood. Suddenly I was confused. There were no Chinese girls around at all. And if there was one, she wasn't very good looking. Then I started to be interested in Caucasian girls. When you go out with them, other people make certain comments. You begin to feel uncomfortable and wonder if this is what you want. If two pople like each other, things should be okay. But then you realize that there are a lot of higher forces working against you.

How about overseas born girls?

Jeff: They seem to have a different type of background and attitude. That's not to say that all F.O.B. girls are bad. However, you find that a majority of them are aggressive and it's hard to communicate with them. The girls are also very moody and petulant.

At university, ethnicity doesn't matter much. There are so many races in one place. It isn't uncommon to see someone black going out with someone white; it is tolerated more in university.

Tom: Most of my dates have been with Canadian Chinese. I just feel more comfortable with them.

Charles: The way I choose my girlfriend is that she should be Canadianized. That's very important. She should also have the Chinese character too. In other words, both worlds. It doesn't matter where she was born as long as she knows the two cultures. It helps if she can speak Chinese. I don't think I would choose a white girl to go out with.

Lisa: I get along with everyone. I'm a very flexible person. I find that with Canadian born friends, you can just be yourself. It's no problem. But then, when you meet overseas students here, you have to change a bit. They're not the same as you because they think differently. In some ways they think more freely than we do. I find they're more open minded in some things but when it comes to women, they're chauvinistic pigs. They really are. They come across as being just like you: "I'm not chauvinistic. You are free to be what you are. I accept you as Canadian born Chinese girl." But once you start going out with them, you can't be yourself with them. You have to be more subdued. You are theirs. You're not yourself, you're their property. They tell you what to do. You have to act a certain way in front of their friends. I had that experience because of "Bob." A total jerk. He really is! Initially when you meet them, you can be yourself. They take you out and have a lot fun with them. They talk to you on a one-to-one basis. But once you get closer in your relationship and you're more serious, it's more what they say than what you say. Your opinions don't count.

Rosalia: I go out with just anybody. It's whoever I like that I want to go out with. I don't really find any differences between people.

Nguyen: It's hard to make new friends with females. I'm an awkward and shy guy. Vietnamese girls are always talking to their friends. Our culture says it's bad if a girl's too friendly. So now they are reserved and lady-like. They are more accepted that way. We believe in sex after marriage. But here, it's whenever you feel like it. Canadians feel that sex is nothing but a conquest. If they go out with a girl one night, they brag. We don't. I think it's between the guy and the girl. Canadians are too loose. They have too much freedom and don't know about suffering. Plus they should be more understanding. Loose? It's not their fault. It's their cultural way of life and they are brought up this way.

Mary: Well, I have never dated with a Chinese guy who is either born here in Canada or from Hong Kong or China. I have never been attracted to Chinese men. I guess I am a little prejudiced against them. I accept them as friends.

Alex: A girl's origin doesn't bother me. A girl is a girl. If I enjoy being with her, it's okay. It doesn't matter if she's black, white or whatever.

Elaine: It would be easier if he's a C.B.C. than a F.O.B. To tell you the truth, I have never dated with anyone of my own race. Since I live in a white Canadian society, I have a certain idea of what I like. I'm attracted to white guys. I have never been attracted to my race no matter if they're born here or not. Their physical appearance doesn't do anything for me. I find a lot of them are of small build. That doesn't attract me.

Tom: Most of my dates have been with Canadian Chinese. I seldom go out with overseas Chinese. It's because I just feel more comfortable with them. Language wise, it's a lot easier for me to communicate.

Mohammed: I like Pakistani girls more than Canadians. They have more warmth and sensitivity. Women here are impressive in their own way. They think that success is to be a man. Men aren't that great. If women emulate men's aggressiveness and lose their sensitivity, that will be repulsive for both sexes. Females are confused about the worth of males.

Mike: I had an Indian girlfriend but I never met her parents. I find them to be quieter and never aggressive in conversation. They're also shy and want to know more about themselves.

In school if an Indian girl was dressed traditionally, we would consider her as something not to go after. It would be an immediate barrier. If she was pretty and wearing western style dress, we might.

Lisa: Oh! I think mixed dating is a most beautiful thing.

My Korean friend likes Caucasian women as long as they are pretty, modern, thin, shapely and blond. He is very fashion conscious.

What do you feel about mixed dating and marriage?

Lisa: Oh, I think it's a most beautiful thing. I myself would like a mixed relationship. It's different. When I see couples like that, I find that there's no racial discrimination. That Blacks will go with Chinese, Whites will go with Chinese and vice versa. In Trinidad and the rest of the West Indies, the natives and the Chinese can marry each other. I think it's great.

What do you feel about mail-order brides?

Tom: I guess I will always resent that. We are just not used to mail-order brides. It's something I haven't been brought up to believe in. Even though most mail-order marriages seem to work and last.

Aruna, what about your boyfriend X, whom you mentioned earlier, do your parents treat him well?

Aruna: My dad isn't too happy. X doesn't like father's presence. I usually don't bring guys home. But when I took X home, my dad was quite polite. My Mom has always been nice to guys, she was nice to him as soon as she met him.

What is it that X provided that is so special, and that your family can't provide?

Aruna: Security. He comforts and listens to me and does not shout back. He is more understanding than my parents who always get mad at me. He walks to the halfway point for me. He does that a lot. When I want him he drops whatever he's doing to help me. I can always count on him to be there.

What do you provide for him?

Aruna: I really don't know.

What are X's ideas?

Aruna: He wants a quiet lady, not intelligent, he'll take the dumb girls, and she must be a good cook. I don't like cooking and I'm an engineer.

What are your ideas?

Aruna: I don't care, I like oriental guys. I like height. I think if a man can make me laugh and is comfortable to be with me I can enjoy his company. He has got to be athletic and smart. I like oriental looks, especially the eyes. I like the customs.

My parents didn't keep me away from the opposite sex. His parents did. His parents didn't like him going out with me. I didn't meet his parents for 4 years. I talked to his mother on the phone.

I doubt if I will marry an Indian. I have prepared my parents to expect an oriental son-in-law. I don't associate with Indians. I have never got along with Indians, not even my family. If I had a choice, the only thing Indian I would keep up with would be Indian food.

Ming: A traditional Chinese marriage or a pre-arranged one is not as good as a love marriage. I don't expect too much from any marriage. In a pre-arranged marriage, both partners take for granted that it will work. In love marriages there are more alternatives. But they are harder work because there are higher expectations.

Youth Adaptation, Parental Alienation

The Conflict Over Heritage

by Nancy Chan

North American society has had its share of growing pains. In the "New World" parental alienation has become a popular theme. The "generation gap" and communication problems plague relations between parents and their children.

In Eastern societies the "generation gap" is not as wide. A family must abide by rules and there are no exceptions to any rule. Fathers do this, mothers do that and children do what they are told. Grandparents are part of the family and in most cases a relative is as good as family. This is the way Asian families have conducted their family affairs for centuries...in Asia.

In North America, many Asian families are discovering that the old traditions are not holding up. Children are challenging the principles that are dictated to them. North American society has infected Asian children with a taste for rebellion and independence.

This problem of parents who grew up in one society attempting to raise children in another society is not unique to North America. Some ideas, like clothing, cuisine and Walkmans make the transition easily between societies. Other ideas, such as home country politics, *hari kari* and bound feet are best left in the country of origin. Raising children falls between the cracks: some ideas about child rearing should be preserved; some traditions maintained, but not all will adapt successfully. Children's expectations are influenced by their peers in Canada and not based on their parents' experiences "back home." Both parties must realize that there is need for negotiations to reach an understanding.

A major point of conflict between most Asian parents and their offspring is the issue of heritage. A white person born in Canada is a Canadian. A simple matter of reasoning. But what is an Asian born in Canada? A Canadian? An Asian-Canadian? An Asian Canadian? A displaced Asian? Perhaps none of these. What is the *right* answer to this question? What is the *best* answer to this question?

I personally believe that any person born in Canada is a Canadian. Ethnic origins and skin color do not make any difference in this matter. A child can be a Canadian by birth and have an ethnic heritage, also by birth. (Assuming you are born, not made Asian!) As a citizen of this country, the child should learn to contribute positively in this society. It is his or her duty to see that the talents he or she may have are developed and utilized for the benefit of Canadian society.

Citizenship, ethnic heritage, and other concerns of this nature must not undermine the most important thing about each of us: our individuality. What is best for millions in another country may not be the best for us in this country. Parents have my sympathy in this matter for they have no precedents to base their decisions on. What can they do when confronted with unheard-of situations concerning their children? Parents must remember to be flexible and by this I do not mean they should be lenient. They must attempt to make their children understand that they want what is the best for the children. The children, in turn, must make their feelings about what they think is best for them known to their parents. And the children must have a sense of being Canadians, not displaced persons.

A parent says to his child, "Now remember that you are Asian, not like those Canadian friends of yours. You must attend special classes about your heritage or learn your native language so you can be proud of being Asian. Your family is different not the same as your friends' families." Get the general idea?

Parents must be made to see the destructive nature of these claims. These claims take away any sense of belonging to Canadian society a

child may have developed and replace it with an unsure sense of being part of another world which he or she cannot even envision.

A child's friends are important. They help immigrants to overcome their tendency to isolate themselves from mainstream society. If the children have begun to make friends with white or ethnic Canadians, parents must not harp on cultural differences which can harm a potentially healthy and rewarding relationship.

I was born and raised in Canada. I went through all the teenage traumas of wanting to be "in," popular at school and trying to be a part of "the crowd." Individualism is not a positive trait to have until you at least reach adulthood. To stick out of "the crowd" because of your obvious ethnic origin is one thing, to have your parents insist on emphasizing these differences (via clothing, customs, etc.) is the equivalent of social suicide to most kids. Their desires are based on the desires of their peers, here, in Canada. If they are living in Canada, why should they act like they were living somewhere else?

The almost universal answer to this question is answered by parents "because you are Asian. Because you have a heritage which Canadians do not have." Is this supposed to justify to a child the endless hours of language classes while his friends are playing basketball? Does the time spent on maintaining traditions make the child a better person or could the time be spent learning the social skills he or she will need to make a positive contribution to the society he or she will eventually live and work in? Could the child, in frustration from the endless conflicts with his family over his "heritage," turn away from it completely? The answer to all these questions is: Yes! I see it happening to friends, hear about others who have rejected their precious "heritage," watch parents alienate their own children because they have neglected to ask themselves

What is the use of a family moving to Canada if it breaks up over the move?

the one, all-important question: "Am I doing the best for my child?"

Parents must realize that while an appreciation of their heritage is "nice" to teach to their children, their children will be living and working in another culture, a different society from which they were raised in. Appreciation of culture need not take time away from the child's other interests; nor should it demand more time than a child is willing to give. The key point here is *time*. Spending two, three, four hours a week in heritage classes, language tuition, fulfilling family demands regarding tradition, is a contribution of time the child must make willingly.

Children do not need special classes, parents or traditions to make them aware that they are different from their Canadian white friends. The differences are quite obvious and impossible to hide. A child should become aware that these differences have a history, that family customs have reasons and that he should be proud of his heritage. No qualitative judgements like "better," "more," "stronger," or "older" should be used in reference to one's heritage. Each person's heritage should be a point of pride for him. But that should not mean putting another one's heritage down.

A child's participation in activities such as team sports, academic studies, clubs and hobbies provides a base from which he can view life with his peers. A child's awareness of his "heritage" should not be developed at the cost of personal development. Parents must realize that their children have opportunities that were never open to them. Canada is a great place to grow up in.

Why move to a new country if you are going to burden your child with so many family obligations that he or she will have no time to partake of the marvellous opportunities this country has to offer to all its citizens? As long as the child is constructively occupied his parents should offer encouragement, not despair or get enraged because he is "losing his heritage."

But what is "heritage"? Is it the

color of your skin, the language you speak, the food you eat or the customs you have? I am of Chinese descent. I look Chinese. I am not terribly fluent in Chinese, I enjoy most of the food and practise a few of the traditional customs. Other people may do more or less than I do, but it does not make them any more or less Chinese then me. We are born into our heritage, it cannot be taken away from us, nor can I renounce it. I certainly cannot "lose" it. Once parents and their children realize this they can take the first step to a common understanding about what it means to grow up in Canadian society.

A child's Asian heritage must be seen as a positive thing. Being Asian in Canada does not make us worse than other Canadians. But it does not make us better either. We are merely different – another color, another element in the Canadian mosaic. Children must be taught that all contributions to Canadian society are good and equal, whether made by a white, black or a yellow person. Parents tend to put unnecessary emphasis on the fact that their children are "Chinese or Japanese or Korean etc." Unless these children have a valid citizenship in those countries, then I would say that the children are Canadian first and foremost.

Parents who bring with them their country's racial prejudices and attempt to teach them to their children are doing a great disservice. Racism is destructive no matter what the cause. Canada is not a perfect country, there are racist difficulties here as elsewhere. But let us handle the Canadian problems here, not the problems of the Irish and the English, the Indians and the Sikhs, the Chinese and the Japanese and all the other conflicts of this world. Children will have enough to cope with here without the burden of conflicts from elsewhere. Bitter battles with no end should not infect the children who live and study in this apparently tolerant society.

Over and above the question of a child's heritage, there are the usual problems of growing up. These problems, which always seem to be a matter of life and death to teenagers, should not be ignored by parents. The increase in teenage suicides is evidence that unless help and understanding is given to teenagers – and race is irrelevant here – more unnecessary deaths will result.

The feeling of isolation is a great

My mother made a real nuisance of herself while I was dating: listening to phone calls, opening my letters...

problem for Asian children in small communities and even in large cities. Parents tend to be involved with business but children are expected to get an education. It is not uncommon for a child to require a bit of help, some guidance, when he or she begins that journey towards adulthood. It is a somewhat frightening journey no matter where it occurs. And there are problems on the way.

Asian children may begin to have doubts about their heritage, or show signs of rejecting anything connected to being Asian. This causes concern and brings a response from parents which results in more conflict. Communication, a willingness to *really* talk can clear the air about many matters.

One matter that often comes up is inter-racial dating. This was a particularly sensitive topic with my mother. I grew up in a town in New Brunswick which, (surprise!) did not boast a large population of Chinese Canadians. My mother wanted very much that I marry a person of Chinese descent. But who thinks that way at seventeen, when you are just starting to date?

My mother did not want to take the chance that I may become involved with a white Canadian. She made a real nuisance of herself while I was dating: listening to phone calls and opening my letters. I am headstrong and went about my own business whether she liked it or not. We tried on several occasions to talk on this subject but we never got very far.

In cases like this, where the parent is unwilling to listen or reason, I recommend that a teenager carefully think out the reasons and motivations for his or her actions. Perhaps the parents have a point that the teenager may not like to

Parents who attempt to teach their children their home countries' prejudices do a great disservice.

acknowledge. Self-destructive behaviour is not a healthy route to take. There is no sense in cutting off your nose to spite your face. A teenager decides, as a person, an individual, to continue on his or her present course of action, against the parents' wishes, then he or she must be prepared to take the consequences.

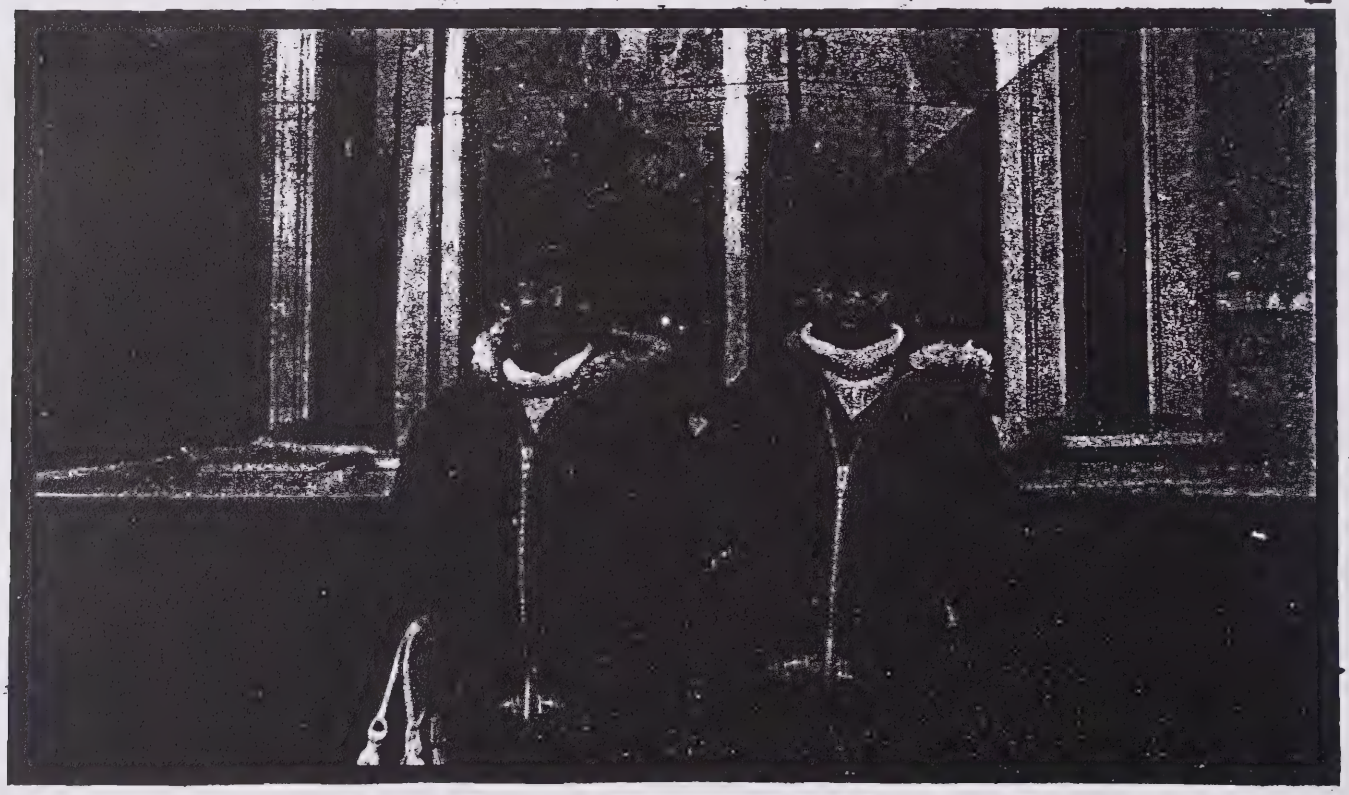
While this is not exclusively an Asian problem, I have found Asian teenagers more likely to indulge in self-destructive behavior just to get back at their parents. They resent their heritage being pounded into them. They are tired of living up to their parents' expectations of the perfect son or daughter. They are angered by their peers' rejection of them. They feel unsuccessful in life since they are destined to be a "minority" for the rest of their lives. A kid's pent-up emotions on these issues can cause a breakdown in communication between a child and a parent. The whole relationship may even break down.

Resolving deep conflicts between parents and children may take more than talk. It may take the aid of a professional, trained to deal with such troubles. Asians must learn to make use of the professional help that is available to them to deal with family problems instead of hiding them.

Resolving deep conflicts between parents and children may take more than talk. It may take the aid of a professional, trained to deal with such troubles. Asians must learn to make use of the professional help that is available to them to deal with family problems instead of hiding them.

There is no reason to feel ashamed about seeking out professional help. Asian families must learn to seek help when the problems are too large or unfamiliar for them to resolve. Again, what is the use of the family moving to Canada if the family breaks up over the move?

Growing up is hard for everyone and it is understood that children with a dual heritage have more than their share of trouble coping with some situations. They need their family support in the new country. Parents have difficulties adjusting to a new country too. Somewhere in all this adjusting a common bond can be found. It takes understanding on both sides to resolve the problems both sides face.



A Hard Life but Rewarding

Visa Students in Canada

by Alfred Lam

The visa students in Ontario high schools usually come alone. They are between the age of 15 to 19. Their visa permits them to attend a specified school for one school year, which can be renewed. They must notify Immigration Canada if there is any change in their plans, even taking an evening course in another school within the same school system they are in. They are not permitted to work, and in the summer months, they must eiher take summer courses or return to their country of origin.

In the academic year of 1981-82, there were 66,000 visa students in Canada, of which 15,095 were enrolled in Ontario secondary schools. These numbers represent a 50% increase over the 1980-81 Statistics Canada figures. For the 1982-83 school year, an estimated 20,000 visa students were attending Ontario secondary schools. At least 40% of these students were from Hong Kong, 23% were from Malaysia, and the rest were from other countries including the United States.

Tuition fees for Ontario secondary schools range from $3,000 to $5,000 a year. This amount has been rising rather rapidly. In addition, with air fares, room, board and clothing expenses, it can easily cost a student between $12,000 to $14,000 a year at the present time to attend a public, or a separate, or a private school in Ontario. What concerns the visa students most is that not just high school fees are rising but university fees are rising as well and they are doing so at a rather unpredictable rate.

In spite of the high cost of education in Canada, post-secondary education in the country of most visa students is often so limited that not only the children of the very rich come here. Many visa students are able to study in Canada because their extended family is willing to pool resources to help them, but the students are also expected to support them in the future. In these cases, the students are under great pressure to succeed and not to let down the entire family.

The situation of thousands of visa students, still in their teens, come over by themselves to attend our high schools is rather new. It probably did not start until the late seventies when enrollment began to decrease in many public high schools. They were forced to open their doors to foreign students in order to save teacher jobs and cut down on costs. The influx of visa students picked up momentum during the period of high uncertainty and anxiety in Hong Kong at the beginning of the eighties because of its uncertain political future after 1997. Many Hong Kong parents sent their child over not just to get an education but also to "test the waters" where they may want to immigrate.

The increase in the number of visa students in the public school systems was unexpected and the systems were unprepared for them. Visa studeants were placed wherever there was space available. They were clustered in a few high schools where enrollment was particularly low. When there was a sudden addition of a large number of foreign students in a school, it inevitably created tension between the newcomers and the local students. Visa students generally had different needs. They required extra counselling time for their urgent needs for information about Canadian education. They also needed extra help with their language difficulties which meant special programs of study, extra help after school, slower class progress, and so on. Without adequate planning and staffing, school personnel experienced difficulties in meeting the needs of these students. The task of helping them was made all the more difficult because school per-

sonnel was unfamiliar with their backgrounds, culture and language. The situation has been greatly improved in recent years thanks to the pressure put on the school boards by the Toronto Chinese community, teacher groups and other concerned groups.

In addition to public schools, there are also private visa schools which cater mainly to visa students. In 1981 there were 19 private visa schools in Toronto. Since then, two had folded and three new ones opened up. The private visa schools, with their aggressive advertising campaign along with their overseas recruiters and representatives, have been able to attract by far the largest number of visa students. However, the ways they recruited students had caused a great deal of concern. A couple years ago, the Globe and Mail ran a series of articles detailing some of the controversies concerning these schools. For example, in a number of cases, their overseas agents and advertisements painted

It costs $12,000 to $14,000 for visa students to attend school in Ontario.

a rather misleading picture of these schools. When the students arrived at the schools they found the real situation far inferior to what was claimed. In at least two cases, the students found on arrival that the schools no longer existed. Since school fees were paid in advance, the student victims demanded their refund but were refused. When the plight of the students was brought to the attention of the authorities, none of the government departments was willing to intercede on their behalf. Needless to say, the experiences were extremely upsetting to these young and inexperienced students who were new in the country and were handicapped in the English language. Also revealed in these articles were incidences where the private visa schools inflated the Grade 13 student examination submitted for university entrance. The examples cited above not only caused great damage to the credibility of Canadian schools but they tended to fuel the anxiety and apprehension of visa students who already felt rather unsettled coming to a strange country.

The visa students who came since the late seventies are a much younger group. Some of them have barely finished high school. Quite a few have only two or three years high school. Many probably never have the opportunity of making any major decisions in their lives, nor do they have time to sort out their interests or educational directions. They are still financially dependent on their parents. They all say they hope to enter university, but for many this aspiration was often

Andy Tong

"We feel homesick. We feel lost."

based on the wrong reasons, such as parental wish, making more money, higher social status, keeping up the appearance or for lack of a better alternative.

Wu-Ling was a 15 year old girl from Hong Kong. She was referred to the Chinese-speaking social worker on her third day in school as she appeared to her teacher extremely upset in class. In fact the social worker found Wu-Ling in a state of panic. Feeling like a stranger in school, not being able to understand her teacher in class, not able to find her way around the school in order to follow her timetable, Wu-Ling was driven to tears with heightened anxiety and confusion. She felt she did not have enough English or self-confidence to discuss her problems with her Canadian teacher. She felt helpless and miserable.

In Wu-Ling's case the social worker in school was able to help her through the most difficult period of adjustment. Soon she was able to face other difficulties on her own. Others may not be so lucky for Wu-Ling's experiences in school are only the more obvious ones. There are many not so obvious difficulties between Canadian schools and schools in Hong Kong, which the visa students may find difficult to adjust to and which could be quite bewildering and anxiety provoking to them. Many of them came from a school environment which was formal and ritualized – students wore uniforms, stood up when talking to the teacher, never spoke in class unless asked to; the teacher was the main focus in the classroom, who prepared and directed all the work done by the students. On the other hand, Canadian classrooms are "student-centered" and the atmosphere more relaxed, sometimes to the point of appearing rowdy. The teacher-student relationship is casual and informal. The students are expected to participate in classroom activities which often includes class discussions and student presentations. Students are expected to undertake self-directed researches and discoveries. There is a value placed upon treating the students as individuals capable of making their own decisions, to have free expression of opinions and feelings. Students are expected to make choices from a wide range of "options" for their course of study. Almost all visa students experience difficulties in the English language in Canadian schools. Most of them have studied English for several years before they came to Canada. They had studied English as a formal academic subject in which grammatical rules and dictionary meaning of words were drilled. The teaching of the functional aspects of the English language appeared to be the exception rather than the rule in Hong Kong schools. Even in the so-called English schools, where English was supposed to be the medium of instruction, in fact, Chinese was used. Only the text books, exercises and examination papers were in English. Canadian classroom, on the other hand, stresses teacher-student interactions often in the form of classroom discussion and classroom presentations by students in which listening and oral English skills are emphasized. Also Canadian teachers adopt a conversational style of teaching and emphasize problem-solving skills rather than retention of factual information. These differences put the visa students at a great disadvantage because of their language handicap and lack of experience in this form of learning.

While visa students are experiencing a form of "culture shock" in Canadian schools, the "shock" of adjustment in their life outside is no less severe. They have to cope with the feelings of loneliness, isolation and homesickness. They have to adjust to the extreme changes in weather and temperatures and changes in social and cultural life. In school or outside, there are few signs or references which they can understand as guides in their social interactions. They are handicapped in one area they need most to get a better control of their environment, namely their English language skills. Perhaps the greatest difficulty they have to cope with lies in the demand for independence and apparent lack of limits to their freedom in their new life in Canada. Chinese teenagers are accustomed to the security and comfort of a highly structured family in which all the major decisions are made for them. They find themselves poorly prepared to live alone in a strange country, to be self reliant, having to make all decisions on their own, to manage their own time, money and household chores. No sooner have they arrived in Canada, they are faced with a series of pressing problems, such as accommodations, transportation, household management and maintenance, coping with emergencies such as illness and accidents, important school decisions such as subject options, types of schools, choices of post-secondary institutions or career choices, and so on. Perhaps these feelings are best summed up in an essay written by a visa student.

"It is boring and lonely to live in a foreign country. There is no relatives, no friends. We have no recreational activities. The only entertain-

A sudden large increase in visa students created tension between the new comers and local students.

ment we have is going to Chinatown to see some Chinese movies and read newspapers to find out what's happening in Hong Kong...there are many things to decide which we wouldn't have to worry about if our parents were here or at least if we had somebody to consult. When we are sick, they are not here to take care of us. When we are lonely, they do not know, and when we are in need of help, they are not giving us a hand. We feel homesick. We feel lost."

While most visa students somehow manage to adjust, some are experiencing serious personal problems. Lonely and homesick, some of these young visa students crave for companionship and affection to meet their dependency needs. It is not uncommon to find groups of visa students sharing an apartment or a flat on a co-ed basis. Adolescence is also a period of awakening sexual feelings. For some young visa students, unsupervised by adults, uncertain of the limits to the freedom they enjoy, they may get into relationships which may result in teenage pregnancy or negligence of their studies. A few of these students may become involved with criminal gangs or bad company and become victims of extortion or other forms of exploitation. Others may find their experiences in Canada too stressful. As the pressure of their studies increases, the fear and anxiety caused by the difficulties in adjusting to a new school and to a new way of life deepen, and as their feelings of loneliness and homesickness set in, the resulting tension could be unbearable. In some students this tension may lead to depression, nervous breakdown or some form of anti-social behaviours, as in the case of Theresa.

Theresa was a quiet, shy, rather plain looking student of 17 from Hong Kong. Her English was very weak. Apparently, Theresa had hoped to spend only one year in high school before entering university. The school however wanted her to take several Grade 11 and 12 subjects so that her full Grade 13 course would have to be delayed for at least one year. Even so Theresa was struggling academically because of her poor English skills.

Theresa lived in a rooming house. She seemed a loner in school. She had one relative in Toronto but she saw him rarely. In December, Theresa was charged with shoplifting. The offence involved articles of clothing valued under $50.

In her meeting with the social worker, Theresa readily admitted to her offence and seemed genuinely remorseful. She could not explain her behaviour and said she neither wanted or liked the articles she took from the shop. She talked to the worker about her feelings of loneliness and isolation but mainly her disappointment and anxiety in her studies and the delay of her plan to enter university.

Theresa insisted to plead guilty to the charge despite her lawyer's advice to do otherwise for fear that the sentence may jeopardize her stay in Canada. Fortunately, she was given a suspended sentence and ordered to perform community work for one year.

In working with Theresa, the social worker had the impression that her behaviour seemed to be her attempt to find relief to the tensions caused by a long series of frustrations, disappointment and anxieties.

It must be pointed out that the examples cited above represent the more serious cases of problems in adjustment. While the difficulties are numerous and severe, a large number of visa students are bright and highly motivated who still manage to achieve their goal of university entrance. For most of the visa students, their difficult experiences, hopes and disappointments are best expressed in these words written by one of them.

"Although leading a visa student's life is not easy, the price is worth paying...we have learned a lot. Things like adapting ourselves to a new environment, finding accommodation, taking care of ourselves, tackling problems, making decisions and overcoming loneliness can only be learned in a new place where your families and friends are away from you. As not many people have this opportunity this is a precious chance in our lives when we are trained to be independent, strong, persevering and mature. We do feel discouraged sometimes when things are not going well, but when we think of the goals ahead of us, we can overlook the setbacks and gain the strength to go on again."

1997 is Coming

Hong Kong's Year of Destiny

by Dora Nipp

With Hong Kong reverting back to Chinese sovereignty in 1997, the District Board elections are creating increased interest. During the next 13 years, the transitional period, Hong Kong's political structure faces dramatic changes. In the March 7 election, 237 of the 426 seats were open, nearly double that in 1982. Some see this as a definite move closer to representative government. In the fall, ten members will then be elected to the Legislative Council, the colony's top law making body. When nominations closed there were 503 candidates for 19 advisory District Boards.

The Asianadian spoke with Mr. Lee Shun-wai in Hong Kong prior to the election. He campaigned in the joint districts of Central, Western and Kennedy town. Elected for District Board, he will now represent Hong Kong's largest constituency. At 24, he is an instructor and graduate student at the University of Hong Kong.

Mr. Lee reflects on his decision to run for the District Board in this candid inverview.

During my years at university I was not, comparatively speaking, particularly active in university affairs. But I was on the departmental and faculty boards as a student representative. From a critical point of view, perhaps even skeptical perspective, it's difficult for an historian or student of history to accept easily what is stated as fact without serious questioning. I found that students who were involved, for example, the student body, were curious. They asked a lot of questions, and you in turn, spent time and effort convincing them of your point. Then after all that, they simply sat down and did nothing.

I feel students should take a more active interest in politics. At the University of Hong Kong, I see essentially two reactions to changing affairs in light of 1997. In the last few years a number of groups have emerged to discuss these issues. They want to do something, but because of insufficient time, their commitment to studies, and of the concern for jobs after graduation it's difficult to participate wholeheartedly in politics. Nevertheless, the emergence of such groups is significant, and I believe this is also occurring in other post-secondary schools and colleges. My second observation is that, in spite of what I've just said, it's difficult to actually assess the degree of concern and involvement, but I still think there's something there. Fairly speaking though, many still just step into the library and simply forget everything else.

> Today we are part of history. We are making history.

I graduated in 1982 when things began to change rapidly. The issue of Hong Kong's future had already risen to the forefront when Lord Macklehose then Governor of Hong Kong went to Beijing. When he returned, he reassured the people to "rest their hearts," and so many did. It's possible that in his talks with Premier Deng, Macklehose was informed of China's intent to take back Hong Kong in 1997 – but was never made public. Not long afterwards the Nationality Bill was introduced. The situation changed even more quickly with Mrs. Thatcher's trip to China in September 1982.

In the summer of 1983, when I had returned from a month and a half in Europe, the situation was again shifting. In September we had the so-called Black Friday when the stock market collapsed. My analysis was that "it was finished, the British had to go. The Chinese government had already decided to take back Hong Kong at no matter what cost." That's contrary to what some people believed at the time. They assumed that the British would maintain some sort of linkage, but from my understanding of Chinese politics, that was impossible. It was at this point that I decided I should become involved, but how? I applied with the government of Hong Kong, but they didn't want me. I didn't want to go into business at the time nor was I interested in teaching.

I really love Hong Kong. I don't think I'm a rolling stone sort of person. I want a home and I feel Hong Kong is my home. I also love China.

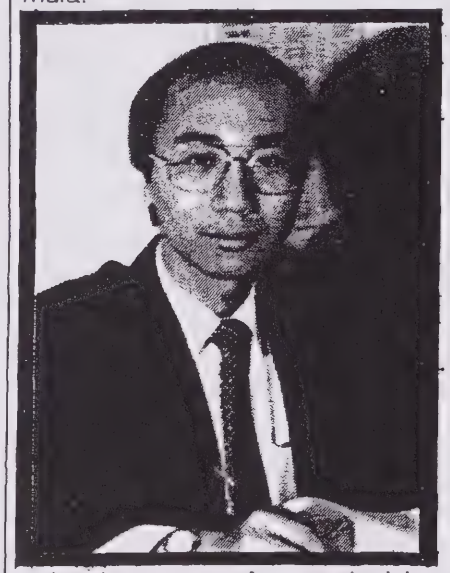
When I first went there in 1981, my feel for the country was overwhelming. I feel Chinese.

I'm interested in the fate of intellectuals, including that of Chinese intellectuals. Because of my years at university, I've come to believe that I am an intellectual. Somehow that's my meaning of existence. My thesis proposal was originally on this topic – how they regarded themselves, their self-image what problems they faced and how they solved or failed to solve them. I hope that, in a way, through them I can better understand myself and what needs to be done. It's my intrinsic belief that intellectuals must respond. We have a responsibility to contribute what we've learned, to accept social responsibility. I don't think those who refuse to accept the responsibility of social burdens are true intellectuals.

I believe that talking is no longer useful. For two years I've been writing for magazines and journals on the future of Hong Kong, but now I feel that it helps little. After much reflecting, I've come to the conclusion that participation is essential. For me, theory and participation should be combined. Simply advocating without taking action is not good enough. I had no intention of running in this election but certainly there are contributing factors which encouraged me to do so sooner than I had anticipated.

One has to do with the so called formula of "Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong." If it's to be successful you have to find capable people who know how to run Hong Kong. Before, it was the British, but now we should let more people, dedicated to the success of the transitional period; who want Hong Kong to continue on, take over. That's what I'm trying to do but I need to learn more. Being a politician is no easy task.

The more involved I've become, the more I've come into contact with people really concerned about Hong Kong. In the process, I hope they will contribute to the pool of human resources which will in turn contribute to the success of the formula.



Another reason for my decision at this time is related to the first and that is the development of human resources. By running, I draw on supporters who are working together toward a common objective – winning the election. The election is immediate, the timing is important. It's not as far off as 1997. It's difficult for people to plan far ahead, but not for us because the election is in March. We have a definite timetable.

Through the election I hope to attract the interest of more people to take action. I want to be the focal point so that we can talk, learn and contribute together. It's still too early to judge the response of the constituents. Usually in local politics we downplay the political tune and emphasize the social issues. In addition to a campaign technique, it's also a reflection of local politics. That is, we should be concerned about the daily welfare of the people. My four main concerns are: to fight for more open area, a particular problem in my constituency; to promote social welfare as there is a large number of older people in my district; to resolve traffic congestion and lastly to improve links and communications between the constituents and the District Board.

I am not a political leader, and my supporters do not belong to a political group. Most candidates run as individuals but some also belong to societies and associations. In Hong Kong we only have two political parties, but they are so unimportant that no one really remembers their names. There are approximately three types of groups. One is a pressure group such as the Christian Industrial Committee, the Chamber of Commerce or the Public Housing Committee which advocate a particular sector's interests. In addition we have opinion groups including the Observer and the Hong Kong Affairs Society which are interested in Hong Kong as a whole. There are also groups such as the Hong Kong Peoples' Association which reports or announces that it will take part in the politics. The three categories are by no means exclusive, there is a degree of co-operation among them. But in Hong Kong no one calls itself a party, a dang. It's still too sensitive, so we keep our distance from it.

I decided to run in August last year, a bit late. Things were happening so quickly that I decided I couldn't wait for another three years until the next election. I don't know what will happen by then. Originally I wanted to complete my studies, perhaps do a Ph.D. overseas and then return to Hong Kong. But beside the timing, it's also difficult for me to get outside because of financial problems.

My response to the Sino-British agreement is to react positively. You have to. My immediate reaction to it was that it's O.K., that's still my response.

It's interesting how in previous years as you're studying history, you go from the traditional phase to the modern era. Today we're part of history, we're making history. It makes me feel powerless in the face of change.

Death in An Evacuation Camp of One Who Never Saw Japan

A Short Story

by Kerri Sakamoto

When they remembered his death for every year after, every 16th of November, they would remember his face before his wavering eyelids stilled, and his glistening body under the light of the kerosene lamp before its warm sweat lifted up into gentle vapour at its final stirring. Then they would remember themselves on that night cramped tightly around the cot on which he lay. They couldn't allow themselves voices then and allowed nothing to escape their mouths nor eyes. They swallowed carefully and their hands were stiffly clenched, the skin tightening grittily across bleak bones in their laps. They sat in the dingy outer circle of the single light that flickered and brightened and flickered and brightened and the grey of the woolen blanket covering the lower portion of their brother's body seemed to seep into their faces as if by osmosis. There it settled until the flame of the lantern shone momentarily at its brightest then again resettled unflinchingly. They could feel, each of them, the grey spreading softly into their complexions, into their eyes and they watched him through a dim veil.

He was still beautiful, they thought, even through this grey. And it then seemed to them that the veil lay delicately upon him now as if tired, suspended dust had quietly fallen upon the black depth of his hair, along the sleek upward slope of his half-closed lids, the slender length of his nose and across all his taut angles. Each fluttering of his lips or eyelids sprinkled up particles silver and illuminated into the light. They were continually waiting for him to rise to let all of it sift into nothing or back into the neat folds of the blanket. They recalled the occasional rustling of his legs beneath those folds and thought how foreign his beauty seemed at that moment – so still, so reticent, and so unlike the brother they knew. Their Juji, tall, limbs spanning lithe ground, hair waving in the wind, was always in finely-honed motion; even as he stood before them talking, his long fingers would gently flex and fan. And when he spoke it was with that same ease of expression, without any fear of striding straight into the eyes of whomever he was speaking to. He always had that engaging Japanese manner of seeking affirmation of whatever he had said. And they remembered always answering that yes, that was so. They recalled Juji on the logs at the mill nimbly manoeuvering them onto the flume, never once falling into the water, never once falling away from the beauty of his balanced grace. Everyone knew Juji and watched him.

Juji's death reminds them all of what he suffered, what they suffered ...

Then they recalled seeing Teru slowly raise her hand from her lap to the lamp to try to adjust its flame so that it would stop wavering. It was old and kept feeding unevenly on kerosene. None of them wanted to see him in those brief flickerings when all his pain glimmered across to their faces. They heard once again the sound of their mother's broom scratching at the ice forming in the crevices of the walls. They saw her staring at the cold corners surrounding her Juji who was dying.

Before he died, his head tilted back, his mouth fell slightly open

When they look into their worn photograph, they see their timidly homeless faces staring up at themselves.

University of British Columbia

and out of its dark hollow came a strangely ungracious gurgling cough and for that moment they could not recognize him. They quietly remembered the silence that followed. Teru began gently sponging his body with warm water as if it could still respond to her touch, her face growing more expressive with each stroke. They remembered the sound of water splashing against the side of the steel bucket placed near the cot as being a much too everyday kind of sound to settle around a dead person. Their father who had sat for so long, small and old in the dark with Juji's trousers in his lap, held them in his tense, moist hands, crying dryly. For as long as they knew their father, he had always been old, but then he looked still more callously aged. Their hands unclenched bit by bit, their father slowly stopped crying and their mother stared into the corners.

All this they recalled and the thinness of the walls that splintered with each new wave of cold outer wind, the wooden table with its uneven legs shifting on uneven ground, and the cold dirt beneath their buttocks. They saw the clear particles of ice ever forming in numb corners of this room. This room, this shack was not to be distinguished from any of those with which it formed a row, and row upon row formed block upon block in a hastily resurrected ghost town delineated at its fraying edges by many dark strong mountains. This was where they remembered Juji dying and the way they would remember how he must have felt dying here – after being swept up and aside and buried among these mountains, hoping not to be forgotten, too afraid to say something to be remembered. It was so much the way they had all felt but kept trying to live past feeling, long after they had left the place.

They take out an old photograph every November 16th; sometimes between November 16th's. They clutch at its corners and renew the bitterness they look for in each of their own faces in the photograph. The coffin lies in the foreground – a mail-order coffin sent for from Vancouver, and they all peer over top of its greyness, black and white faces trying to express a carefully hidden, complex anger that could never let itself be shown in two shallow dimensions.

He was taken in the coffin to a vague clearing at the edge of the camp's blocks where over and under him his friends placed twigs and dry branches. They watched as the flames began, so orange and intense that they could not erase the grey of the coffin which softly peeked in and around the flailing arms of the fire. His friends kept the flames healthy and burning, poking them here and there. They remembered the terrible smell and leaving for their house and finding their father in the dark again with Juji's trousers. In the morning he left for the clearing with a tin can in his hands.

Juji's death reminds them all of what he suffered, what they suffered knowing he died so far from their father's home and so far from his own mistaken home in the half-comforting company of only those as homeless as he. When they look into their worn photograph, that is what they see – they see their timidly homeless faces staring up at themselves across their dead Juji's body in the grey coffin.

Rules of Survival

A Documentary Drama

by Daisy Lee

Ming limped back with a fat, purpley-blue eye, his two front teeth knocked out, a cracked knee cap, and the damnedest, biggest smile he could stretch out on his bloodied face. Mother, of course, was crying. Father was, unfortunately, ecstatic – his son had protected the Chang name, and he couldn't help but be proud. Mother cried even harder, so Father thought maybe it was time for a lecture, or he'd never hear the end of it from Ma.

"Okay, Ming. Enough, Mai. I'll talk to the boy." Father looked at Ming warily, thinking at once what a little shit disturber he was, but what a fine brave son he had, just like himself. The teacher had called them and told them that Ming had gotten into a fight. A little brawl over a silly word they had read in class. "Chink." It meant a narrow crack in the wall, but some of the boys had misinterpreted the word and used it to taunt his son with, so Ming had landed the loudest one with a sock in the face and broken his nose. Unfortunately, he slugged someone with friends.

Father was torn between lecturing so he wouldn't be lectured, or patting his son on the back and congratulating him. He looked at his wailing wife and decided on self-preservation.

"Well, what have you got to say for yourself, young man?" he said in his best authoritarian voice.

Nothing obviously, because Ming just grinned back with that ridiculous smile on his face – maybe it hurt too much to talk. Father paused for a moment, glanced at his wife, turned back and winked at Ming, and proceeded with his lecture.

"What did I teach you for the past ten years, Ming? Don't you remember the "Rules of Survival" I drilled into you when you first started school?...Rule #1: You don't fight with boys twice your size, especially if you're as skimpy as you are. Rule #2: Keep your mouth shut and your mind open, and nobody will bother you. Rule #3: Next time you get into a fight, make sure you have some decent friends like the big black boys next door. Rule #4:...."

A little brawl over a silly word they had read in class: "Chink".

He was cut off by Mother who was now no longer in tears, but in a fury at Dad for getting Rule #3 wrong. Ming nudged me and signalled me to go upstairs while Ma bawled Dad out for teaching their only son all the wrong things, and Dad tolerantly reassured her that their son was provoked into fighting, and that he wouldn't want a coward for a son anyway.

We snuck up and shut the door behind us, and then Ming brought out the two treasured teeth he had lost and recovered from the battle with "Paleface." He put the prized ivories in my hand as if they were awards he had won in his arts competitions – a memorandum of his first fight with the white boys, after obeying the "Rules" for so many years. I thanked him solemnly and went to the washroom to wash the blood from his offering and his face. A little while later, we were both rolling on the ground, laughing helplessly as he made funny, but painful faces by sticking his tongue through the toothless gap and drawing his eyes to the centre. Since he couldn't talk, he decided to entertain me.

The next day, Ming went back to school with warnings from Ma and Dad to remember the "Rules," and to stay away from the white boys. I had given him my "long life" necklace to wear, just in case. He had tugged my pigtail, made a funny face, and was gone. I wanted to go with him, but they wouldn't let me, of course. I was only four years old – the teachers didn't want me yet, so Ma and Dad would keep me until they did. Ming was six years older, and the only son, so he got to do everything I wasn't allowed to do as a girl. What they didn't know was that he taught me everything

I brought James Crispo home to my family for dinner. This man was the "boy" who had knocked Ming's two teeth out many years ago.

Maclean's Magazine

he learned anyway. I was his best friend and confidante, his "mother" and his sister, his equal and his admirer – so versatile a pal and so close to home that he didn't need any other friends.

Fifteen years later, Ming was twenty-five and managing our parents' restaurant, and I was in university getting my bachelor's degree in political science. Despite nineteen years of my family's urging me to become a schoolteacher or a lawyer, my inclination was to become a political activist. Politically, I wasn't going to join the Liberals who they had said permitted my ancestors to come into Canada to work on the railroads. Instead, my inclination was slanted towards the more right-wing Conservatives – the "kill or be killed" party. What I had learned from my parents' "Rules of Survival" was completely contradictory to what they had intended me to learn. At first, I had tried not to fight with the big boys, tried to keep my mouth shut, my mind open, and I had made pretty and popular friends. After high school, I couldn't do it – I would not cheat myself. I set up my own "Rules of Survival" when I reached University: I fought with the big boys, I argued with my professors, my peers, questioned authority, and knew my real friends were not the artificial catalogue look-alikes, but the others who were unpopular, uncouth, and unidentified as of yet. In my political future, support would come from them when I was Prime Minister of Canada.

Ming wasn't quite sure what to make of me, but he was going to support my political interests, as I had supported his business ones, even though he felt the chances of my Prime Ministership were unrealistically laughable. No Chinese man, never mind a Chinese woman had yet been elected as municipal representative, never mind party leader. I ribbed him for being a male chauvinist pig, and we discussed the probability of any ethnic person being elected to federal leadership.

During my second year in office as the Prime Minister's advisor, I met a man who was bright, witty, ambitious, politically unsound, and whom I liked very much. I brought James Crispo home to my family for dinner. I went off with a bang: Ming looked like he had seen a ghost, and Ma and Dad were purposely speaking in Chinese so he couldn't understand. This man was the "boy" who had knocked Ming's two front teeth out many, many years ago. I had never known his name, or heard who had beaten my brother up in his first official fight, but here he was in my home. He was the "slei doy" that called Ming names out of his boyhood ignorance.

I looked at both parties and suddenly started to laugh. I could make important advisory decisions to the leader of our country, but I didn't know how to handle my family problems. This was a microcosmic reenactment of a Caucus zoo, a political jungle scene, and I was sitting on the throne seat with the biggest headache of my life.

Being the Intellectual Forefront

Chinese Students Movements in N. America 1880-1984

by Jim Wong-Chu

In November 1880, a fourteen year old boy named Yao-ju stowed away on a boat anchored in Boston harbour. This ship was headed for the Mississippi River. Soon Yao-ju just arrived from China a few years earlier to apprentice in his uncle's tea and silk shop in Boston. The young man strongly desired to gain an American education so that he could acquire a favoured position in his own country enjoyed by foreign-trained citizens. Fortunately, Captain Jones, the skipper of the ship, a kindly and pious man, took this bright youngster under his wing.

Arrived at Wilmington, North Carolina, Captain Jones introduced Soon to his new patron, a general Carr of Durham, not only a Confederate soldier and textile manufacturer, but also a rich philanthropist. The General agreed to grant the boy the education he wanted.

After Soon Yao-ju was baptized as Charles Jones Soon, he enrolled and completed studies at Vanderbilt University before returning to China. Years later, having added a 'g' to his last name, Charlie Soong became a rich Shanghai industrialist and fathered some of the most famous children in modern China's history. His eldest daughter, Eling, married H.H. Kung, who later became finance minister in Sun Yat-sen's government; Chingling, the second oldest daughter married Dr. Sun Yat-sen; and the youngest, Meiling, married Chiang Kai-shek.

Soong had travelled from his native China to North America for higher education. This was the result of reforms adopted by the Manchu government in an effort to modernize China and bring the country into the twentieth century. The Empress Dowager, Tzu Hsi, offered a prize to such enterprising people who would dare to go abroad and absorb the wisdom of the West. She decreed that anyone who graduated from a foreign university would be granted the honorable title of "Yang Han Ling" and would be known as Best Foreign Scholar.

Inevitably, as these students made their way to the schools in Japan and gradually to other learning centres in Europe and North America, they began to see, from the outside, the corrupt nature of their government. Many of them began to participate in reform movements active both inside of China and abroad.

"When I first heard Dr. Sun Yat-sen, I was immediately impressed by this man's sincerity and the scope of his vision," said P.Y. Lo, the Chairman of Strathcona's Vancouver Chinese Elderly Citizens Association, recalling his experience of hearing Dr. Sun Yat-sen's lecture on a new democratic China when he was a student studying at Cornell. He and his fellow students later helped organize student underground activities to aid Sun's cause.

This article is a brief look at some of the North American student activities which individually or collectively made an impact on the society. As you will see, more emphasis is placed on student activities in Canada. Since relatively little research has been done on this subject, this article is intended only as an overview and, perhaps, a guide for future researchers.

From the turn of the century and

up to the 1930's, overseas Chinese students from China were the major force among the North American Chinese student population. During this period these students, studying in most of the major universities in North America, banded together to form the Chinese Students' alliance in the United States of America. The organization served as the focus for political discussion and new ideas. A publication called The Chinese Students' Monthly, based in Baltimore and Washington D.C., was distributed to its membership and included readers in China, Dutch East Indies, Malaysia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hawaii, Philippines, Burma, Thailand and the Strait Settlements.

A sizable local-born Chinese population appeared by the 1920's. Yet upon graduation, they faced many obstacles. Prior to WWII, most sectors of the industries, the professions and the civil service excluded Chinese. In B.C., a Chinese lawyer who graduated from Oxford was not allowed to practice. He obstinately set up shop but had to resort to hiring a white lawyer as a "front" to handle his cases in court. There were others, like the Chinese Canadian student who graduated from UBC with the second highest marks in his mining engineering class. He wrote more than fifty applications to all the mining companies in B.C. and Alberta and received rejection replies from them all. While some companies made excuses, there were a few that told him that they could not hire him "because as a Chinese, no white men would be willing to work under him." Ironically, none of his classmates, even the ones with the lowest marks, had trouble finding work.

The discriminating labour climate in North America was a boon to China. Many local-born graduates, along with their overseas counterparts, went to aid the fledgling republic. Many of them rose quickly to prominence in their field of expertise. A good example would be Susan Yip Sang. Educated at McGill and Columbia, in 1933, she became the principal of the First Provincial Girls Middle School and English professor at the Sun Yat-sen University.

Despite limited hope for advancement and other restrictions, there were, however, a number of bright spots during this period. One of them was the Vancouver Chinese Student Soccer team. Comprised entirely of second generation Chinese they were organized in 1919. By mistake, their sponsor, a local bank manager, entered them

into the senior league instead of the bottom division. Nevertheless the boys went out to play and won. They kept on winning and before they were disbanded, due to injuries and conscriptions into the Canadian army, by the mid forties they had won three major championships and were finalists for the Canada Cup, the most prestigious amateur award in the Dominion.

Also, during 1923, an angry UBC student named Thomas Moore Whaun fired off a strongly-worded letter to the editor of the Vancouver Sun challenging the unfair nature of the Chinese Immigration Act. The Act, before Parliament, was designed to exclude all Chinese from entering Canada. Thomas Whaun achieved notoriety when his letter was translated and reprinted in every Chinese newspaper. Later it was used as the text for a nationwide brief presented to the government by the Chinese communities in Canada. The legislation, however, became law on July 1st, 1923 and since that day until it was finally repealed in 1947, the Chinese Canadians declared July 1st "Humiliation Day" – a national day of mourning.

In 1931 the Japanese invaded Manchuria. This event vaulted the Chinese student population throughout the world into a new sense of political consciousness. There were demonstrations and calls for a boycott of Japanese goods everywhere.

"In those days, every town and city in North America with a sizable Chinese population organized their own patriotic groups," said Roy Mah, recalling his experiences as the president of the Chinese Youth Association in Victoria. "The strategy was to enlist the support and sympathy of all levels of Canadian society. In the 1930's, there were only 200 Chinese in Victoria and 18,000 in Vancouver. To be effective, we had to reach out for all kinds of support. We would do things such as write letters to local papers, organize The One Bowl of Rice fund drive, and whenever ships came into Victoria dock to load scrap iron destined for Japan, we would go down to the docks with placards and picket them." Eventually, with growing support among other Canadians, the federal government put a stop to the shipments.

When the Second World War came to an end, the Chinese in North America looked forward to imminent changes with great optimism. On May 7, 1947, former Liberal leader, The Right Hon. MacKenzie King, addressed the Parliament proposing the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 because it was "discrimination on grounds of race against a friendly and allied people."

Many racial barriers began to fall. In the fifties and early sixties we saw many "firsts." Lawyers, engineers, architects, nurses, and doctors began to practice for the first time. Douglas Jung became our first Chinese Canadian Member of Parliament when he won a seat in the Diefenbaker Government in 1957. Thomas Moore Whaun, our hero in 1923, was the first Chinese to play the Vancouver Stock Market. He was also the first Chinese to move into West Vancouver, a previously exclusive "White only" area, like the West End, Point Grey, Shaughnessy, and the British Properties.

The Fifties and early sixties were the period of knocking down barriers, and as the second generation Chinese married, they gave birth to a whole new generation of sons and daughters who later took their places among the universities and colleges of North America. By the last sixties, the mood was ripe for activity and self-examination.

In 1969, Chinese American students, Black, Chicano, and other Asian students participated in the so-called Third World strikes on the campuses of San Francisco State College and the University of California at Berkeley. By the early seventies, courses in Asian American culture were introduced in United States colleges and universities.

There is a feeling among certain sectors of Canadian society that a "disproportionate" number of new Asian achievers are outhustling, out performing "average" Canadians.

In the summer of 1957, 120 Chinese students from the Lower Mainland of B.C. took part in a youth conference at UBC. During the three days of workshops and lectures, they discussed topics on assimilation, racism, the Chinese community and changing roles of men and women. This conference inspired another in 1979, sponsored jointly by UBC's Chinese Varsity Club which is comprised of mostly local born Chinese and the Chinese Students' Association which is predominantly foreign-born, entitled "Between Us Chinese." The purpose of this workshop was to explore and understand the differences of both groups. Towards 1980, students began to move towards consolidation.

On September 30, 1979, the CTV television network's W5 public affairs program aired a segment called "Campus Giveaway." The message was plain – the Chinese were foreigners, regardless of their

The message of the CTV program was plain – the Chinese were foreigners, regardless of their birthplace.

birthplace.

In the opening remarks W5 host, Helen Hutchinson conveyed the message of a new Chinese threat:

> "Here is a scenario that would make a great many people in this country angry and resentful. Suppose your son or daughter wanted to be an engineer, or doctor, or a pharmacist. Suppose he had high marks in high school, and that you could pay the tuition – but he still couldn't get into university in his chosen courses because a foreign student was taking his place. Well, that is exactly what is happening in this country."

The CTV camera crew took footages out of context from a Toronto Chinese student group's club's day orientation to depict the hordes of 'yellow' faces. While Helen Hutchinson narrated her emotional outcry against foreign students, the cameras zeroed in on six Chinese faces which turned out later to be all citizens and one of them, Jennifer Lee, was born in Canada.

At first, there was general apathy among the Chinese communities towards this nation-wide broadcast. A group of Toronto students, however, began a campaign to air their grievances stressing the serious implications the W5 program will have on the future of the Chinese in Canada. The students found support in the new professionals now gaining prominence in their community and an Anti-W5 movement began to take shape.

The ad hoc group went across the country to solicit support. By the following year, the protest became nation-wide. The Anti-W5 committee, with support growing daily from prominent politicians and human rights groups, threatened CTV and its president with a lawsuit.

On March 16, Helen Hutchinson went on air on the W5 program to issue a statement of "regret." She also shifted the blame to the universities for giving the program inaccurate facts.

On the West Coast, the Vancouver committee was outraged and asserted that CTV's "regret" was "wholly inadequate to redress the damage done by the story to the Chinese Canadian community." By then, labour unions, educational groups, and a diversity of social and ethnic organizations began to issue statements against the story.

On April 16, Murray Chercover, the president of CTV, issued a public apology saying that "Campus Giveaway" was largely based on extrapolations that distorted the actual statistics...the majority of the research data was incorrect. "We were clearly wrong in our presentation of the facts and W5's initial defense in the program." In the end, Chercover said that "corrective measures have been taken. We believe we have now instituted a better system of checks and balances in respect to editorial control and presentation of programs."

This is the first time in the history of North America that a major television network had made a public apology concerning misrepresentations in programming. The Chinese community won a great battle and a new national organization was born.

In April, 1981, at the University of Toronto, delegates from different Chinese communities across Canada gathered and founded the Chinese Canadian National Council for Equality.

In these hundred years, Chinese students in North America have demonstrated a certain bravado, a keen interest in the issues of the day and also a strong knack for organization. Because they were situated in the intellectual forefront of our society, it was fitting – and necessary for them to take action. As students of today, it is important to understand that we do belong to a history, and our struggles, no matter how trivial and insignificant, are in reality, a part of a continuous historical legacy.

Although the student-initiated W5 protest won a great battle for ourselves, its underlying message has not been quelled. That message is: There is a feeling among certain sectors of Canadian society that a "disproportionate" amount of new Asian achievers are out-hustling, out-performing "average" Canadians. This apprehension is spelled out most clearly in an article inside Saturday Night Magazine, June 1977, entitled: "Can the Canadian elite tolerate the Chinese invasion?"

Yet with a Toronto Board of Education survey showing that eighty percent of Chinese students – both Canadian-born and immigrant – are in the top academic mainstream of the secondary school system. And although no university administrator would mention publicly about quotas, the lecture hall of some faculties in some universities have seen a dwindling of Chinese faces.

So the Chinese students are caught in a double jeopardy. Will there be a backlash to us pursuing our aspirations and freedoms like "other" Canadians? Backlash? Absurd as it may seem, this is perhaps the Chinese students' challenge in the Eighties.

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Nancy Chan was a past *Asianadian* administrative staffmember and publicity assistant for the Canasian theatrical production of *F.O.B.*

Teri Chan is a special education teacher of the *College Street Secondary School, Toronto Board of Education* at the *Clarke Institute of Psychiatry.*

Jim Wong Chu is an active community worker and freelance photographer.

Alfred Lam is a social worker with the *Toronto Board of Education.* His assignments during the last two years has been helping visa students.

Daisy Lee is a freelance writer and a graduate of Radio and Television Arts from *Ryerson Polytechnical Institute*, Toronto.

Dora Nipp was a Doctorate candidate on a Common-wealth Scholarship at the *University of Hong Kong* completing a thesis on Overseas Chinese.

Christine Pinto is an avid supporter and volunteer of *Asianadian.*

Kerri Sakamoto contributed moving short stories to *Asianadian* in the past. Her main concern now is the status of the Japanese Canadian Redress issue.

Jack Seto is the editor of this issue and a freelance photographer.

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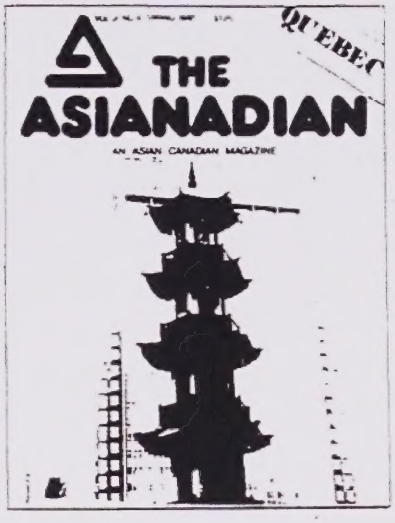

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